



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

NEWS RELEASE

SNAKE RIVER BASIN OFFICE

1387 S. Vinnell Way • Boise, Idaho 83709

(208) 378-5243 • FAX (208) 378-5262

ID#00-24

December 12, 2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Rich McDonald or Paul Weyland - (208) 378-5333

ANOTHER WOLF FOUND DEAD IN CAMAS COUNTY, IDAHO

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement agents have confirmed the death of another gray wolf in Camas County, Idaho. B-96, the alpha male of the Smoky Mountain Pack, was recovered on December 4, 2000. The dead wolf was found near Lick Creek about 20 miles north of Fairfield.

The Nez Perce Tribe's aerial monitoring efforts indicated that the wolf was last seen alive on November 22, 2000. The Service's forensics laboratory in Ashland, Oregon, confirmed that B-96 suffered from a gunshot wound.

B-96 is the second wolf to have been shot in this area of Camas County. A male gray wolf, B-57, was found dead on November 23, 2000, about 8-10 miles from where B-96 was most recently discovered. Special Agent Paul Weyland noted that, "We have received several excellent leads and many calls regarding the death of B-57, and we will aggressively pursue our investigation of the death of B-96 as well. If wolves continue to be injured or killed, Idaho will not reach its recovery goal, which means wolves will remain an endangered species for a longer time." Carter Niemeyer, Idaho Wolf Recovery Coordinator, supported Weyland's statement, stating, "This senseless act of criminal behavior only prolongs our efforts to begin the countdown to delist wolves in the Northern Rockies."

The Service has offered a \$2,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the killing of the wolf. In addition, Defenders of Wildlife has contributed another \$2,000 toward the reward. "There are troubling signs that these two wolf killings may point to a larger pattern. What the killers don't realize, or don't care about, is that they are undermining the hard work of ranchers, conservationists and others on gray wolf recovery, pushing off further any chance of removing the strict protections for wolves under the Endangered Species Act. Wolves, ranchers, local communities — in fact, everybody loses if these illegal killings don't stop," said Suzanne Laverty, Defenders of Wildlife Pacific Northwest representative.

The killing of an animal protected under the Endangered Species Act is punishable by a fine of up to \$100,000 and one year in jail. The Service is requesting that anyone who may have information regarding the illegal killing of B-96, or who might have noticed suspicious behavior in this area between November 7th and December 2, please contact law enforcement agents immediately at (208) 378-5333.

FWS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 93-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses more than 530 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 66 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.